2:Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1951
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wives will be fertile. Abortion is said to be very rare and practised only by unmarried girls. Though the men of the kraal may hope that monorchids and babies born with defects and deformities will not survive, they do not kill them or let them die. The proper care and nurture of children is the concern of the whole family and household, and from the moment of birth care is taken to isolate the child from any contact which might be injurious to it. Even the father keeps away from the mother's hut for the first few days lest he inadvertently cause it some misfortune. The prohibition on coitus between parents till the child is weaned is seldom infringed, although it imposes long abstinence, for the child is suckled till he can digest solid food and can toddle about homestead and camp by himself. Artificial aids to weaning are rarely necessary, infants passing slowly from the breast to cow- and goat-milk, though sometimes they are sent to their maternal grandparents for some weeks to make the break. Children have first claim in the allocation of milk from the herd, and if there is a shortage it is the adults, and not they, who go without.

The care of small children falls naturally to the mother, and it is she who feeds and bathes them and attends to their other wants. But the father also takes an interest in his infant children, and one often sees a man nursing his child while the mother is engaged in the tasks of the home. Nuer fathers are proud of their children and give much time to them, petting and spoiling them, giving them titbits, playing with them, and teaching them to talk; and the children are often in the byres with the men. The affection of children for their fathers is very striking in Nuerland. I have never seen a man beat his child or lose his temper with him, however aggravating he might be. When a father speaks crossly to his child, as he does if, let us say, the child goes to the edge of a river or among the cattle, where he may be injured, it is evident that the child is not afraid of his loud words and obeys from affection rather than fear. In his first years a child is corrected by his mother and elder brothers and sisters, who may give him a few strokes with a grass switch if he is naughty.

Daughters grow up under the direction of their mothers. Mother and elder sisters give a girl training in household tasks and what moral advice and worldly wisdom they care to impart. The father takes little interest in the affairs of his daughters. His chief concern with them is to ensure that they are well married.